

Veterans and The Public Mental System Washington DC 2012

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WASHINGTON, DC

unique characteristics



- **A Tale of Two Cities**
 - Home to Very High Income and Very Low Income
 - Very Transient residents and multi-generational families
- **“City-State” - Collapsed Political Structure**
 - State and local functions; Mayor is Governor, City Council is State Legislature
- **Federal and Local Governments Co-Exist**
 - Relatively stable economy
 - Small tax base (federal buildings, universities, hospitals, nonprofit organizations)
- **Under the Thumb of Congress**
 - No vote in Congress, no 10th amendment protection
 - No legislative or budget autonomy
 - DC National Guard only activated by the President
- **Geographically Condensed**
 - All urban, height restrictions on buildings
 - 19 hospitals, 19 nursing homes, but no state prison



Washington, DC

a magnet

- Both home-grown and transient consumers
- Consumers come to DC for a variety of reasons:
 - Some believe there are lots of jobs
 - Some believe there are better services
 - It's easy to establish residency
 - “Right to shelter” - access to housing for the homeless
 - “Someone put me on the bus to come here”
 - Anger at government
 - Perceived access to the government
 - Monuments and free museums
 - In love with the First Lady



Ed Fischer's world

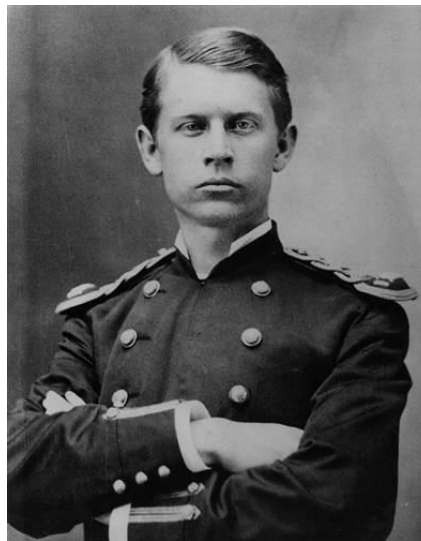


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Overall themes

- Almost nothing in the literature discusses the intersection of the Department of Veterans Affairs system and public mental health
- Disconnects between military, veteran's administration, academics and public mental health system
 - At least in Washington DC
- Disconnects between programs (eg Yellow Ribbon) and psychiatric societies and state mental system
 - Minnesota



Transit centers

- Union Station
- Greyhound Stations



Public Mental Health System in Wash DC

- St Elizabeths Hospital (“state hospital”)
 - About 270 patients (down from 7000)



Wash DC DMH



- Mental Health Authority
- Government run clinics
 - 35 K St NE
 - 821 Howard Road (children)
- Comprehensive Psychiatry Emergency Program (CPEP)
 - Mobile Crisis Services
 - Homeless Outreach
- Core Service Agencies
 - Community Connections, Green Door, Pathways, etc
- 19,000 patients in the community

VA in Washington DC

- Hospital in Wash DC serves National Capital Region (NCR)
 - Homeless outreach
 - Supported employment
- Various residential/nursing facilities outside region
- “Central” VA in downtown DC
- Vet Centers



Long History of American Soldiers



Homeless Veterans

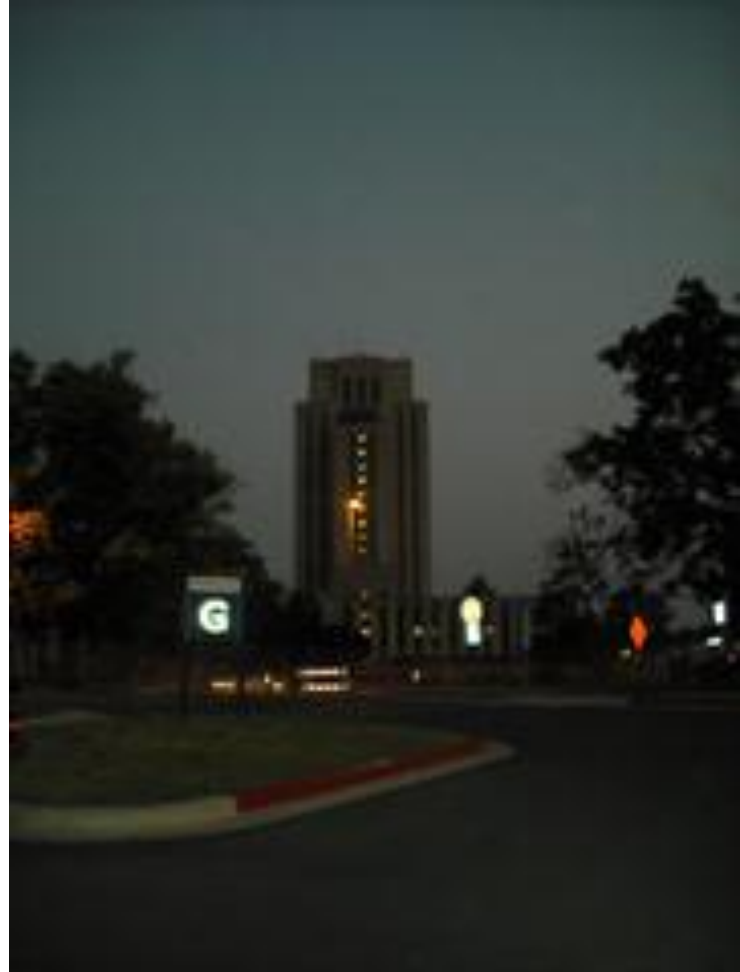


Military in and around Wash DC

Walter Reed Army Medical Center—closed



Walter Reed National Military Center—in Bethesda



Pentagon



Other Military Facilities in the NCR

- Andrews AFB
- Bolling Joint Base
- Ft Belvoir with new community hospital
- Quantico Marine Base
- Ft Meade
- Defense Center of Excellence
- National Intrepid Center of Excellence



Veterans Courts

80 veterans courts



Schools and Veterans



*Increasing number of
Veterans organizations
in schools*



Current efforts

- Single POC at VA for patients in the public mental health system
- Getting patients into systems of care and supported employment
- Combined homeless outreach meetings
- Asking question at Access Help Line “Are you a veteran?”
- Office of the Attorney General teaching VA on commitments, involuntary hospitalization, etc.
- Discussing with psychiatric societies
- Institute of Psychiatric Services
- Coming Home Project



Future efforts

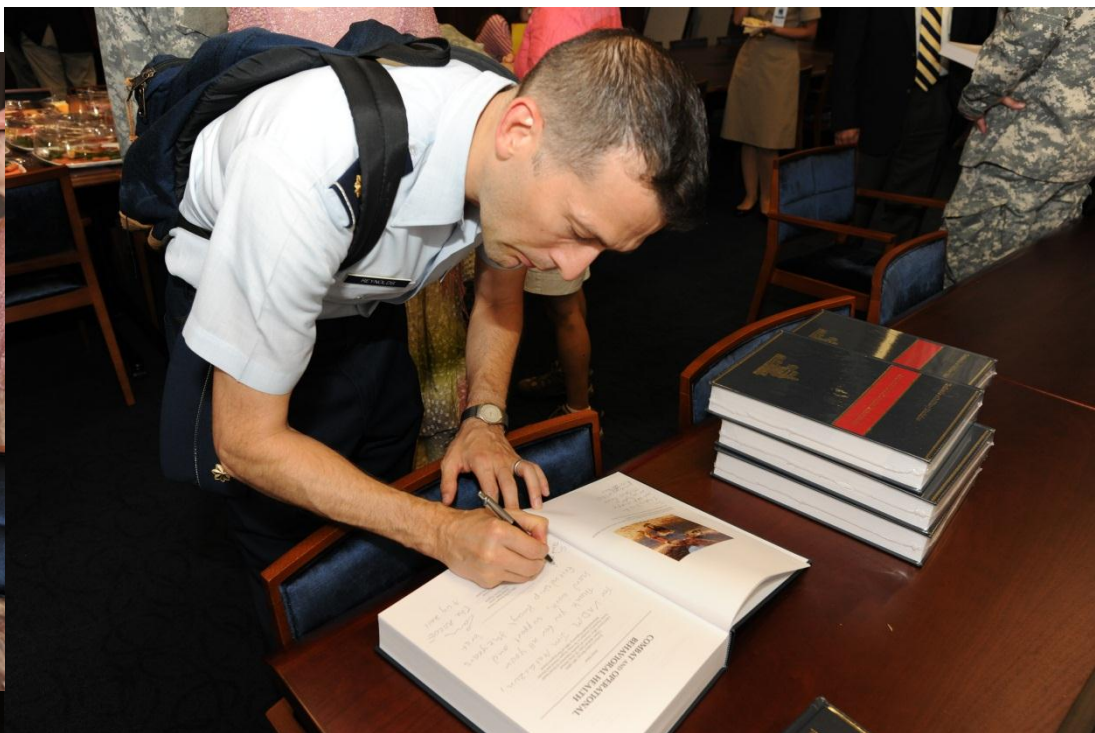
- Greater interaction of VA, military, public mental health, academic medicine
- More organized community supports for returning veterans
- More integrations for return home efforts
 - Retreats
- Veterans court in DC



Questions/Discussion

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